**Graduation Ceremony discussion notes**

**November 13, 2012**

**Student Recognition Advisory Committee**

* Formal ceremony
* Culminating event
* Tradition is important

**Pre-Event for Staff**

* Provide buses for staff at each building to bring to the Adams Center
* Continue tradition of having a brunch for teachers at the school the morning of graduation (perhaps sponsored, coordinated by the school’s parent organization or one of the student organizations)

**Dress**

* Ceremony participants wear robes
* Staff wear black robes and hoods consistent with their degree (if bachelors or no degree, wear MCPS collar which is gold)
* People on stage, also wear black robes
* Student recommendation on footwear: clean, comfortable, have a heel connection to avoid tripping

**Music**

Recommended to be consistent:

* *National Anthem*
* Processional – *Pomp and Circumstance*
* Inspirational Interlude – all schools should have one that is performed by students

Okay to be individualized by school and from year to year:

* Recessional music choice
* Inspirational interlude music choice

**Seating (see diagram Sarah will create a diagram)**

Recommended to be consistent:

* Students ALL sit in alphabetical order
* Faculty sits in front of the student section, in a separate section on one side; staff must RSVP so that seating section is clearly defined and each chair is labeled with staff member’s name
* Stage: Board of Trustees, Administrators, speakers (including student speakers, but they will go to their seats in alphabetical order to sit with their classmates when their speaking role is complete)

**Speakers**

Commencement Address:

* Chosen by students (through a process developed and worked by student government or other student organization; be sure to communicate final results to students)

Student speakers:

* Senior Class President
* Senior Class Vice President
* Other senior class officer or class member
* Three opportunities for student speakers:
  + Welcome and introduction of high school principal
  + Senior class speech, introduction of Commencement Address speaker
  + Closing and turning of the tassels

Other speakers:

* Superintendent: Presentation of the Class

**Medallions, YES; Valedictorians, NO**

* Student feedback indicates that students only want to be recognized as A (one) valedictorian within the traditional meaning (e.g. only THE top student is recognized based soley on academics)
* Committee feels this does not meet the belief statements established and would like to create consistency ACROSS the district to no longer recognize valedictorians inaccurately at any school
* Medallions provide the opportunity to recognize MORE students in a well-rounded view. See medallion information for more details.

**Graduation Program Notes**

* See Graduation Program Template – see template for more details
* Cover of program will be printed in ivory/off-white cardstock, with black/white images of student artwork on front cover; school and MCPS logos will be printed in black/white on the back cover
* Internal program for each school will be developed (using template defined by committee) at the district-office to ensure accuracy of spelling and grammar; a schedule timeline with deadlines for when information needs to be provided to the district-office will be available soon
* Student artwork must be submitted BEFORE spring break
* Listing of scholarships for individual students should be removed from the program altogether; rather provide a thank you to the following entities who have generously offered scholarships to students of \_\_\_\_\_\_\_ High School

**Graduation Ceremony order of events for program**

* Processional: *Pomp and Circumstance* (Staff lead students into ceremony during processional, students lead staff out during recessional)
* Color Guard ***if applicable***
* National Anthem: *Star Spangled Banner*
* Student introduction of the high school principal, includes a welcome to the ceremony (should be senior class officer such as president or vice president, or other member of the senior class)
* Principal welcome and introductions: includes introduction of all the people on the stage and the inspirational interlude
* Inspirational interlude: some form of musical performance by students, at least some are likely members of the senior class
* Senior Class Speaker: this is the traditional senior speaker (class president, vice president, other?); also introduces the Commencement Address speaker
* Introduction of Class Valedictorians: the principal will ask all valedictorians to stand and will list the names of each valedictorian individually
* Recognition of High Honor Roll: the principal will ask all students who have achieved high honor roll to stand and be recognized
* Medallions: each school will recognize students with a medallion; principal will provide a description of the meaning of the award and attributes/selection process (a written description will also be in the program)
* Presentation of the Class of 20XX
* Superintendent will speak and present the graduating class to the Board of Trustees
* Class Roll: a designated speaker will read the names of each member of the graduating class as they cross the stage to receive their diplomas
* Presentation of diplomas: members of the Board of Trustees will hand each graduate their diploma and if a medallion winner, will also place the medallion on the graduate and present the medallion winner with a personalized letter describing the award and why they were chosen
* Closing the Turning of the Tassels: a senior class officer such as the president, vice president, or other member of the senior class will stand before the graduating class to have students turn their tassels as a class
* Recessional: music chosen by each school/senior class; students will lead staff out